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Illustrations

THE KING'S GATEWAY

THOUGHTS IN VERSE AND PROSE CONCERNING DEATH AND THE LIFE BEYOND

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY
R. E. SELFE

Fulmine

Mors Janua.

“Pilgrim, no shrine is here, no prison, no inn :
Thy fear and thy belief alike are fond :
Death is a gate, and holds no room within :
Pass—to the road beyond.”

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT.

LONDON :
SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING
CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

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INTRODUCTION

A WISE and helpful living writer tells us he does not think that we ought to dwell much on the thought of death, and adds: "One of the most illuminating thinkers among our contemporaries was accustomed to say, 'Death does not count.' It does not count, in this sense—that it is not of great moment whether God calls us in youth, middle age, or old age. God is just and merciful, and will somehow give us a fair chance of doing and being what He requires of us." In another place the same writer tells us that he thinks there is no subject connected with religion which occupies people's thoughts more frequently, no subject on which more difficulties are felt, and none, perhaps, on which we are so reluctant to put our difficulties into words, as the subject of the Christian hope of immortality. And at such a time as this, when the world is being forced to realize as never before the problems of Life and Death, the principles for which we are living, and for which vast numbers are daily hazarding their lives, perhaps we are in special need of reassuring voices, past and present, who have put into words for us "at sundry times and in divers manners" the truths of the unity of Life and Death,

Introduction

of the continuity of all that makes our life of value here,
of our own irresistible conviction that

“ God who sent us forth from Him
Will take us back again.”

This little book has been compiled in the hope that the poems or extracts may come with a message of hope and assurance to a few at least of the great multitude who are now facing Death for themselves, or for those who are dearer to them than their own lives. “ In My Father’s House are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.”

R. E. SELFE.

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I must also thank Mrs. Hodgkin for a poem by the late Dr. Thomas Hodgkin ; Messrs. Macmillan for their permission (and Lord Tennyson's) to include *Crossing the Bar* ; also for *Land Ho !* by T. E. Brown, and three poems from Sir Rabindranath Tagore's *Gitanjali* ; the editor of *The Times* for extracts from the article published by them on "Easter Assurance" ; and Mr. Edward Arnold for permission to include some poems which have appeared in a former anthology, *A Goodly Fellowship*. For the rest, if I have omitted making special acknowledgment to anyone to whom it was due, I here express my warmest thanks for all the words of wisdom and beauty which enrich these pages, and am sure that I should have received from all others as kind and generous a response as came to me from those to whom I made a specific application.

THE KING'S GATEWAY

"I am the Door."

LORD, it belongs not to my care,
Whether I die or live ;
To love and serve Thee is my share,
And this Thy grace must give.

If life be long, I will be glad,
That I may long obey ;
If short—yet why should I be sad
To soar to endless day ?

Christ leads me through no darker rooms
Than He went through before,
He that unto God's Kingdom comes
Must enter by this door.

Come, Lord, when grace has made me meet
Thy blessed face to see ;
For if Thy work on earth be sweet,
What will Thy glory be !

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My knowledge of that life is small,
The eye of faith is dim ;
But 'tis enough that Christ knows all,
And I shall be with Him.

R. BAXTER.

*“ After this I beheld a great multitude whom no man
can number.”*

There is gathering in the heavens an innumerable host
Of the valiant and the noble ones who count the world
well lost.

The Lord of Hosts had need of them for the work He
has on hand ;

Now, like the stars for multitude, they wait His high
command.

Every race and every nation, every land beneath the sun,
Has helped to swell that great array, but all in Him are one ;
For the things that made for hatreds, and the things
that made for wrath,

Fell from them as they passed The Gate, and pledged
their new God-troth.

He is ranging, He is sorting them, He is moulding to
His Will

Those wondrous divers elements so that each His place
may fill ;

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The Lord of Life His Kingdom claims, His banner is unfurled,

He is marshalling His forces for the conquest of the world.

The Captain of that mighty host is robed in stainless white,
In His Hand the spear of Justice, and the sword of
Truth and Right ;

He wears as crown a platted thorn—the kingliest crown
e'er worn—

And blazoned on His banner is the glorious Cross of Scorn.

All the dear ones we have lost are in that host beyond
compare ;

He has called them to his battle that they may His
Triumph share ;

And no man there but glories in the gain we count but
loss—

For they proudly follow Him who vanquished Death
upon the Cross.

And the hearts of men are stirring now ; they feel His
Presence near ;

His clarion-call has thrilled the world with its challenge
loud and clear ;

By the dim High Way of sorrow and the clean reluctant
sword,

The Soul of Life is answering the summons of its Lord.

JOHN OXENHAM : *The Vision Splendid.*

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“Ye are come . . . unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.”

Then I saw in my dream that Christian and Hopeful were thus drawing towards the gate of the City. Behold . . . there came out to meet them several of the King's trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who with melodious noises and loud made even the heavens to echo with their sound. These trumpeters saluted Christian and his fellow with ten thousand welcomes from the world; and this they did with shouting and sound of trumpet. This done, they walked out together; and, as they walked, ever and anon these trumpeters, even with joyful sound, would, by mixing their music with looks and gestures, still signify to Christian and his brother how welcome they were into their company, and with what gladness they came to meet them. And now were these two men, as it were, in heaven, before they came at it, being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with hearing their melodious notes. Here also they had the City itself in view, and they thought they heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome them thereto. But, above all, the warm and joyful thoughts that they had about their own dwelling there with such company, and that for ever and ever, oh! by what tongue or pen can their glorious joy be expressed! Thus they came up to the gate.—*Pilgrim's Progress*, Part I,

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"Death may be a delightful surprise."

As to the other state, my chief comfort lies in the thought of God. The God I worship is the sum of all goodness. He is Love and Wisdom and Almighty Power. This is one of the "things that cannot be shaken," and I can trust Him.

"And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar,
No harm from Him can come to me,
On ocean or on shore."

What evil and pain are I do not rightly know, but I am constrained to believe—and I rejoice beyond words to believe—that they are means to a blessed end. Else how could they exist under God's sway? What their province may be beyond the grave I do not know, but the same God rules there who rules here. His faithfulness will be the same. And I find it impossible—thank God—to believe that in the nature of things good can ever be conquered by evil. It must be truly triumphant as long as it *is* good. That evil assails it and persecutes it does not lessen its continual triumph.

I know that when I die I shall have the same old Friend with me who has been so faithful to me all my life in spite of grievous sins. . . . Death itself may turn out to be a delightful surprise. . . . God's way is always as good or better than the best that His creatures can conceive of.—EDWARD CLIFFORD.

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Christ lives.

Not by His wondrous death alone
Christ lives ;
But by the life He gave, unto His own
New life He gives.

The Love which triumphed on the Cross
Lives on.
The death which seemed to end His life of loss
Was victory won.

His wondrous life and death have brought
Heaven near,
And the soul certainty that nought
Of good ends here.
JOHN OXENHAM : *The King's High Way.*

"Heaven is no dream."

Your old Guide shall go before you, and take your hand. Oh, when Christ and ye shall meet about the utmost march and borders of time . . . ye shall see heaven in His face at the first look. . . . Your Guide is good company, and knoweth all the miles, and the ups and downs in the way. . . . Heaven is no dream. "Come and see" will teach you best.

SAMUEL RUTHERFORD : *Letters.*

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"I the Lord will hold thy hand, and will keep thee."

Hold Thou my hands !

In grief and joy, in hope and fear,

Lord, let me *feel* that Thou art near,

Hold Thou my hands !

If e'er by doubts

Of Thy good Fatherhood depressed,

I cannot find in Thee my rest,

Hold Thou my hands !

Hold Thou my hands !

These passionate hands too quick to smite,

These hands so eager for delight,—

Hold Thou my hands !

And when at length,

With darkened eyes and fingers cold,

I seek some last loved hand to hold,

Hold Thou my hands !

WILLIAM CANTON.

The Kingdom of God.

I say to thee, do thou repeat

To the first man thou mayest meet

In lane, highway, or open street—

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That he and we and all men move
Under a canopy of love,
As broad as the blue sky above ;

That doubt and trouble, fear and pain
And anguish, all are shadows vain,
That death itself shall not remain ;

That weary deserts we may tread,
A dreary labyrinth may thread
Through dark ways underground be led.

Yet if we will one Guide obey,
The dreariest path, the darkest way
Shall issue out in heavenly day.

And we, on divers shores now cast,
Shall meet, our perilous voyage past,
All in our Father's House at last.

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH.

“ Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.”

Jesus Christ abolished death—by showing that it is not what it appears to be. Death appears to be the seal of failure, it is the condition of success ; it appears to be an

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end, it is also a beginning ; it appears to be a humiliation and a curse, but its cleansing waters purge the soul of her travel stains, and land her refreshed upon the farther shore. Death, says science, is a Law of Nature. Death, says Jesus Christ, is nothing save the gate through which one passes into immortal life. . . . What was the secret, the hidden source of St. Paul's joyous attitude towards the thought of death ? . . . What made him so sure that "to die is gain"? The overpowering conviction, to which the Resurrection of Christ opened his eyes, that death has no sting to those who know the hidden laws of life . . . the open secret of the universe which Jesus Christ brought to light. In the world without it is exemplified in every harvest-field. The seed sown dies *as a seed*, and takes new life as a blade. "Thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bare grain." The new life is always life on another plane. And if we make a living sacrifice of ourselves in reasonable service to God, the new man whom we shall put on in return for the old man whom we have put off is not just our old selves back again, but a new self, nearer to the image of God. It is therefore our wisdom to live with this thought of gain through loss always before our minds. And then, when the last sacrifice is demanded of us, the sacrifice of our lives—we shall find it easy to trust Death . . . to take away much and to give us more, to deprive us of earth that it may give us heaven.—DEAN INGE.

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" At evening time there shall be light."

O harmless Death ! whom still the valiant brave,
The wise expect, the sorrowful invite,
And all the good embrace, who know the grave
A short dark passage to eternal light.

W. DAVENANT.

When death is drawing near,
And thy heart shrinks in fear,
And thy limbs fail,
Then raise thy hands and pray
To Him who smooths thy way
Through the dark vale.

Seest thou the eastern dawn ?
Hear'st thou, in the red morn,
The angel's song ?
Oh ! lift thy drooping head,
Thou, who in gloom and dread,
Hast lain so long.

Death comes to set thee free ;
Oh ! meet him cheerily,
As thy true friend,
And all thy fears shall cease,
And in eternal peace,
Thy penance end.

DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ.

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"The Last Fulfilment of Life."

On the day when death will knock at thy door, what wilt thou offer to him ?

Oh, I will set before my guest the full vessel of my life—I will never let him go with empty hands.

All the sweet vintage of all my autumn days and summer nights, all the earnings and gleanings of my busy life will I place before him at the close of my days, when death will knock at my door.

O Thou the last fulfilment of life, Death, my death, come and whisper to me.

* * * * *

I was not aware of the moment when I first crossed the threshold of this life.

What was the power that made me open out into this vast mystery like a bud in the forest at midnight !

When in the morning I looked upon the light, I felt in a moment that I was no stranger in this world, that the inscrutable without name and form had taken me in its arms in the form of my own mother.

Even so, in death the same unknown will appear as ever known to me. And because I love this life, I know I shall love death as well.

At this time of my parting, wish me good luck, my friends ! The sky is flushed with the dawn and my path lies beautiful.

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Ask not what I have with me to take there. I start on my journey with empty hands and expectant heart.

I shall put on my wedding garland. Mine is not the red-brown dress of the traveller, and though there are dangers on the way, I have no fear in my mind.

The evening star will come out when my voyage is done, and the plaintive notes of the twilight melodies be struck up from the King's Gateway.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE :
From *Gitanjali* (Song-Offerings).

“ Death is swallowed up in victory.”

If we accept our Lord's teaching [as to Eternal Life], and desire the comfort of it . . . we must school ourselves to regard death as it really is—not an end, not even a break in the unity of life, but a step forward and upward, a step out of captivity into freedom, out of twilight into sunshine, to fuller knowledge and heightened power; and therefore a thing greatly to be desired when God accounts us ready for it. And if God grants us this courage and insight for ourselves, we must not grudge that good thing to our beloved who have passed away before us, though it be purchased with our bitter sorrow and bereavement. . . . We are spared the cruellest pang of thinking of them as unhappy and robbed of all that life gave, all that life promised. “ In the sight of the unwise they

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seem to die : and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction : but they are in peace." Peace, yes ; but not lethargy or inaction ; they are not dead ; they live and grow in strength and wisdom, . . . in that clearer air bringing to more perfect fruition the gifts we know so well, and miss so sadly. . . . Now if there be consciousness and progress in that world, surely it sets at rest once for all the question which troubles many an aching heart, whether it is wrong to remember the departed in our prayers, and hope that they are praying for us. And it sets at rest, too, those terrible doubts about the power and goodness of God, which are suggested by the seeming waste of death. . . . In truth God is not cruel or wanton. The ripe wisdom of age, the half-fulfilled purposes of man's prime, the sweet promise of pure and generous youth are not lost and wasted when the dear mortal body which held them for a little while holds them no more. God has them in His keeping, and they are ours for ever because He has taken them to Himself.

ARCHDEACON J. H. F. PEILE.

"I am Alpha and Omega . . . the first and the last."

Stricken to earth, his sword snapped in his hand ;
Shield cast away ; down-beaten to the knee,
He sees the foes he made above him stand,
Now he has only Me.

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The towers fall ; before his feet there lie
Wrecks of the hopes that he shall never see ;
Naked unto the blast, Death drawing nigh,
Now he has only Me.

But he has Me. The last illusions fade ;
The trumpet sounds no more ; and man set free
From tyranny of dreams his pride had made, .
At last has only Me.

For many loves he now has only one ;
His many gods before the tempest flee ;
His light is dying and his day is done,
But he at last has Me.

EDWARD SHILLITO : *The Omega*.

. . . For me, I lie
Broken in Christ's sweet hand, with whom shall rest
To keep me living, now that I must die.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

Good-night, true brother, here ! Good-morrow there !
TENNYSON.

Death's but a path that must be trod,
If man would ever come to God ;
A port of calms, a state of ease
From the rough rage of swelling seas.

PARNELL.

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The door of death is made of gold
That mortal eyes cannot behold,
But when the mortal eyes are closed,
And cold and pale the limbs reposed,
The soul awakes, and wondering sees
In her mild hand the golden key.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Wakening.

This mortal dies,—
But, in the moment when the light fails here,
The darkness opens, and the vision clear
Breaks on his eyes.
The veil is rent,—
On his enraptured gaze heaven's glory breaks,
He was asleep and in that moment wakes.

JOHN OXENHAM : *Bees in Amber.*

*“ His servants shall serve Him, and they shall
see His Face.”*

However great may be the individual achievements of poet, prophet, philosopher, scholar, statesman, scientist [or soldier], they are but partial expressions of the personalities that appeared here for a time, and then went elsewhere for further discipline, for higher service and fuller expression. The true worker is ever greater than

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his work, and can never fully express himself in his work [here], but he will elsewhere live and grow and do ever greater works for evermore ; . . . for if we believe the teaching of science as to the conservation of energy—even of the lowest forms of it—then still more must we believe in the conservation of the highest forms of energy that have appeared on earth, the personalities of saints and heroes, yea, and of the nameless and numberless multitudes, in whom have been realized the divine energies of courage and truth, of faith and of unfailing hope, of love and boundless self-sacrifice.

CANON R. H. CHARLES.

“ God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

God of the living, in whose eyes
Unveiled Thy whole creation lies !
All souls are Thine : we must not say
That those are dead who pass away ;
From this our world of flesh set free,
We know them living unto Thee.

Released from earthly toil and strife,
With Thee is hidden still their life ;
Thine are their thoughts, their works, their powers,
All Thine, and yet most truly ours ;
For well we know, where'er they be,
Our dead are living unto Thee.

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Not spilt like water on the ground,
Not wrapped in dreamless sleep profound,
Not wandering in unknown despair
Beyond Thy voice, Thine arm, Thy care ;
Not left to lie like fallen tree ;
Not dead, but living unto Thee.

Thy word is true, Thy will is just :
To Thee we leave them, Lord, in trust ;
And bless Thee for the love which gave
Thy Son to fill a human grave,
That none might fear that world to see
Where all are living unto Thee.

J. ELLERTON.

“ And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom.” What says the answer ? “ Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” Where is that ? What is that ? How can the man in his agony debate such questions ? What need that He should ? What can it signify ? “ Thou shalt be *with Me*. Dost thou want more—in anguish or in bliss, in darkness or in light—than to find that I am near thee, as I am near thee now ?”—F. D. MAURICE.

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How know I that it looms lovely, that land I have never
seen,
With morning glories and heartsease and unexampled
green,
With neither heat nor cold in the balm-redolent air ?
Some of this, not all, I know ; but this is so : Christ is
there.

How know I that blessedness befalls who dwell in Paradise,
The out-wearied hearts refreshing, re-kindling the worn-
out eyes ;
All souls singing, seeing, rejoicing everywhere ?
Nay, much more than this I know ; for this is so : Christ
is there.

C. G. ROSSETTI.

“ All life is one.”

For patient searchers on this quest [of what lies beyond this life] the Incarnation has its twofold lesson, two sides of the one Truth, the lesson of the Unity of all Life, and the lesson of the continuity of each life. All Life is one, and the Incarnation teaches us the One Life is God's and ours, or to speak more truly, that it is God and us ; and therefore, though it appears to us as bounded by Time and Space, yet in very truth they have no power upon it. It cannot be holden of them.

We say that hours and years of our life are *past*; and for us the words are poignantly true ; for some of us the

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thought is even more full of sorrow and disquiet than the shadowy future at which we peer forward with dim and fearful eyes. But with Him who is our life there is no Past, no Future : and for us, too, they are but names of the darkness that lies about our path till the Day break and the shadows flee away. If all Life is one, all is safe. Our life is hid with Christ in God, where no change nor chance can reach it. "Of those whom Thou gavest Me have I lost none." In what we call our past, all that was true and vital, whether it was love or happiness or wisdom or beauty, *is* : no moment that we have really lived but is eternal. . . . It is a high venture of faith ; but if we are Christians we are bound to make it.

ARCHDEACON J. H. F. PEILE.

There is no death.

There is no death—
They only truly live
Who pass into the life beyond, and see
This earth is but a school preparative
For larger ministry.

We call them "dead"—
But they look back and smile
At our dead living in the bonds of flesh,
And do rejoice that, in so short a while,
Our souls will slip the leash.

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There is no death
To those whose hearts are set
On higher things than this life can afford,
How shall their passing leave one least regret,
Who go to join their Lord ?

JOHN OXENHAM : *The Vision Splendid.*

Man's life is but a working day
Whose tasks are set aright :
A time to work, a time to pray,
And then a quiet night.
And then, please God, a quiet night
Where palms are green and robes are white ;
A long-drawn breath, a balm for sorrow,
And all things lovely on the morrow.

C. G. ROSSETTI.

" *I am . . . a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, . . . Do this, and he doeth it.*"

Content to come, content to go,
Content to wrestle or to race,
Content to know or not to know,
Each in his place ;

Lord, grant us grace to love thee so
That glad of heart and glad of face
At last we may sit, high or low,
Each in his place ;

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Where pleasures flow as rivers flow,
And loss has left no barren trace,
And all that are, are perfect so,
Each in his place.

C. G. ROSSETTI.

Death is never spoken of in the New Testament as a great catastrophe or convulsion of nature, but as the striking of a tent—*i.e.*, the breaking up of a temporary home, preparatory to a new one—or as the weighing of an anchor, preparatory to a new journey.

L. H. M. SOULSBY.

Joy, shipmate, joy !
(Pleas'd to my soul at death I cry),
Our life is closed, our life begins,
The long, long anchorage we leave,
The ship is clear at last, she leaps !
She swiftly courses from the shore,
Joy, shipmate, joy !

Now finalè to the shore,
Now land and life finalè and farewell,
Now, voyager, depart (much much for thee is yet in
store) ;

Often enough hast thou adventured o'er the seas,
Cautiously cruising, studying the charts,

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Duly again to port and hawser's tie returning ;
But now obey thy cherish'd secret wish,
Embrace thy friends, leave all in order,
To port and hawser's tie no more returning,
Depart upon thy endless cruise, old sailor.

WALT WHITMAN.

*"When the morning was now come, Jesus stood
on the shore."*

I know 'tis but a loom of land,
Yet is it land, and so I will rejoice,
I know I cannot hear His voice
Upon the shore, nor see Him stand ;
Yet is it land, ho ! land.

The land ! the land ! the lovely land !
"Far off" dost say ? *Far off*—ah, blessed home !
Farewell ! farewell ! thou salt sea-foam !
Ah, keel upon the silver sand—
Land, ho ! land.

You cannot see the land, my land,
You cannot see, and yet the land is there—
My land, my land, through murky air—
I did not say 'twas close at hand—
But—land, ho ! land.

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Dost hear the bells of my sweet land,
Dost hear the kine, dost hear the merry birds ?
No voice, 'tis true, no spoken words,
No tongue that thou may'st understand—
Yet is it land, ho ! land.

* * * * *

Dost wonder that I long for land ?
My land is not a land as others are—
Upon its crest there beams a star,
And lilies grow upon the strand—
Land, ho ! land.

Give me the helm ! there is the land !
Ha ! lusty mariners, she takes the breeze !
And what my spirit sees it sees—
Leap, bark, as leaps the thunderbrand—
Land, ho ! land.

T. E. BROWN : *Land, Ho !*

“ He bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.”

Safe home ! Safe home in port !
Rent cordage, shattered deck,
Torn sails, provisions short,
And only not a wreck.
But oh ! the joy upon that shore
To tell our voyage-perils o'er.

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The prize, the prize secure !
The athlete nearly fell,
Bare all he could endure,
And bare not always well,
But who will count the perils gone,
That sets the victor garland on ?

No more the foe can harm ;
No more of leaguered camp,
And cry of night alarm,
And need of ready lamp ;
And yet how nearly had he failed—
How nearly had that foe prevailed.

The lamb is in the fold !
In perfect safety penned ;
The lion once had hold
And thought to make an end ;
But one came by with wounded side
And for the sheep the shepherd died.

Translated by J. M. NEALE.

“ I am the Good Shepherd : the Good Shepherd giveth
His life for the sheep.”—*St. John* x. 11.

“ Fear thou not ; for I am with thee : be not dismayed ;
for I am thy God : I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will
help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand
of My righteousness.”—*Isa.* xli. 10.

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“When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.”—*Isa.* xliii. 2.

“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.”—*Deut.* xxxiii. 27.

“Be ye not afraid, neither doubt; for God is your guide.”—*2 Esdras* xvi. 75.

“The darkness hideth not from Thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.”—*Psa.* cxxxix. 12.

“He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; . . . I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore.”—*Rev.* i. 17, 18.

When days had many of them passed away Mr. Despondency was sent for; for a post was come, and brought this message to him: “Trembling man, these are to summon thee to be ready with the King by the next Lord's Day, to shout for thy deliverance from all thy doubtings. . . . Now Mr. Despondency's daughter, whose name was Much-Afraid, said, when she had heard what was done, “that she should go with her father.” Then Mr. Despondency said to his friends, “Myself and my daughter, you know what we have been, and how troublesomely we have behaved ourselves in every com-

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pany ; my will, and my daughter's, is, that our desponds and slavish fears be by no man ever received, from the day of our departure, for ever : for I know that after my death, they will offer themselves to others. For, to be plain with you, they are guests which we entertained when we first began to be pilgrims, and could never shake them off after : and they will walk about and seek entertainment of the pilgrims ; but, for our sakes shut the door upon them." When the time was come for them to depart they went up to the brink of the river. The last words of Mr. Despondency were, " Farewell, night ! Welcome, day !" His daughter went through the river singing, but none could understand what she said.

JOHN BUNYAN.

Along the shining country
The peaceful rivers flow ;
And in that wondrous country
The tree of life doth grow, doth grow,
The tree of life doth grow.

Ah ! then into that country
Of which I nothing know
The everlasting country,
With willing heart I go, I go,
With willing heart I go.

MRS. G. M. CRAIK.

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In process of time, there came a post to the town again, and his business was with Mr. Ready-to-Halt. So he enquired him out, and said, I am come to thee in the name of Him whom thou hast loved and followed, though upon crutches : and my message is, to tell thee, that He expects thee at his table, to sup with Him in His Kingdom, the next day after Easter : wherefore prepare thyself for thy journey." Then he also gave him a token that he was a true messenger, saying, "I have broken the golden bowl, and loosed the silver cord"— . . .

Then Mr. Ready-to-Halt addressed himself to his journey. When he came to the brink of the river, he said, "Now I shall have no more need of these crutches, since yonder are chariots and horses for me to ride on." The last words he was heard to say, were, "Welcome, life !" so he went his way.—*Pilgrim's Progress*, Part II.

"Port after stormie seas."

Who travels by the wearie wandering way,
To come unto his wished home in haste,
And meets a flood that doth his passage stay ;
Is not great grace to help him over past,
Or free his feet that in the myre sticke fast ?

* * * * *

He there does now enjoy eternall rest
And happy ease ; . . .

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What if some little paine the passage have,
That makes fraile flesh to feare the bitter wave ?
Is not short paine well borne, that brings long ease,
And layes the soul to sleepe in quiet grave ?
Sleepe after toyle, port after stormy seas,
Ease after warre, death after life does greatly please.

* * * *

The term of life is limited,
Ne may a man prolong nor shorten it :
The souldier may not move from watchful sted,
Nor leave his stand, until his captaine bed.
Who life did limit by almightie doome
. . . Knowes best the terms established ;
And he, that points the centonell his roome,
Doth license him depart at sound of morning droome.

, SPENSER : *The Faery Queene*.

" They shall go from strength to strength."

By translation from this world to another new possibilities are opened up. Here, however faithful may be the soul and however fully it may express itself in the outward life, this expression is at best incomplete, and only prophetic of that which is yet to be. But in the case of less perfect characters the need of such translation is still more imperative, and there comes a time when it becomes apparent that further progress in this world is

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barred, whether owing to self-wrought or inherited incapacities or outward causes of arrested development springing it may be from the hand of God Himself. And yet in the case of such characters, how often are the good and evil qualities intermingled in such a way that it is clear that finally only the good will survive—that the strong sense of right and truth will in due time master the traditional proneness to wrong and deception, the inner gentleness and largeness of spirit rise superior to the temporary declensions into suspicious and resentful tempers, and the high purposes ultimately extinguish every unworthy habit and bring every unruly passion into obedience to the spirit of Christ. Not what a man now is, but what he aspires to be, is the real man, and when death removes him from this life's fitful fever and troubled environment, this is the picture he leaves behind him in the hearts of those who knew and loved him, and this is the ideal he is already on the way to achieve, armed with fresh powers and enriched with fresh opportunities.

CANON R. H. CHARLES : *Immortality*.

“*One army of the living God.*”

Come, let us join our friends above,
That have obtained the prize,
And on the eagle wings of Love
To joys celestial rise.

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Let all the saints terrestrial sing
With those to glory gone,
For all the servants of our King
In Earth and Heaven are one.

One family we dwell in Him,
One Church, above, beneath,
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.
One army of the living God,
To His command we bow ;
Part of His host hath crossed the flood,
And part is crossing now.

Our old companions in distress
We haste again to see,
And eager long for our release
And full felicity—
Oh ! that we now might grasp our Guide !
Oh ! that the word were given !
Come, Lord of Hosts ! the waves divide,
And land us all in Heaven !

CHARLES WESLEY.

Our Lord says little about physical death.

Dare we say that suffering is nothing and death is nothing ? Dare we say it this year with the memory of faces, young and eager and greatly loved ? . . . To us

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who remain death is much, but what to them? Has it ever struck you how very little our Lord speaks about physical death? He seems almost to ignore it in His teaching as though it were but a passing incident in life eternal. And tribulation is the lot of all who would follow the Lamb, and to give themselves even unto death is the lot of many of the greatest, best, and dearest of men and women. Dearest . . ., not to us only, but to our Blessed Lord Himself. It has been said that "Things that happen are not really of great importance, what is of importance is man's thought and action in reference to the things that happen," and these sad years are teaching a truer proportion in regard to such subjects. Death and pain are not to-day the things above all others to be avoided. We no longer take as our motto the coward's lie, "A man must live," for we know that there come times when "a man must die."

* * * * *

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Let them rest from their toiling, for their works follow *with them*. . . ." In some other mansion of the Father's House they still work, though it be no longer with toil. Activity without friction, that is their state as described by St. John.

CANON B. K. CUNNINGHAM.

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Draw near, my friends ; and let your hearts be high ;
Great hearts are glad when it is time to give ;
Life is no life to him that dares not die,
And death no death to him that dares to live.

SIR HENRY NEWBOLT : *Poems New and Old.*

How beautiful it is to be alive !
To wake each morn as if the Maker's grace
Did us afresh from nothingness derive
That we might sing " How happy is our case !
How beautiful it is to be alive !"

Not to forget, when pain and grief draw nigh,
Into the ocean of time past to dive
For memories of God's mercies, or to try
To bear all sweetly, hoping still to cry
How beautiful it is to be alive !

Thus ever towards man's height of nobleness
Strive still some new progression to contrive ;
Till, just as any other friend's, we press
Death's hand ; and, having died, feel none the less
How beautiful it is to be alive !

HENRY SEPTIMUS SUTTON.

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"Why should I fear?"

Abba, in Thine eternal years
Bethink Thee of our fleeting day ;
From all the rapture of our eyes and ears,
How shall we tear ourselves away ?
At night my little one says nay,
With prayers implores, intreats, with tears
For ten more flying minutes' play,
How shall we tear ourselves away ?

Yet call and I'll surrender
The flower of soul and sense,
Life's passion and its splendour,
In quick obedience.

* * * *

Whatever darkness gather
O'er coverlet or pall,
Since Thou art Abba, Father,
Why should I fear at all ?

Thou'st seen how closely, Abba, when at rest
My child's head nestles to my breast ;
And how my arm her little form enfolds,
Lest in the darkness she should feel alone ;
And how she holds
My hands, my hands, my two hands in her own.

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A little easeful sighing,
And restful turning round,
And I, too, on Thy love relying,
Shall slumber sound.

WILLIAM CANTON.

“ At evening time there shall be light.”

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Like the bright slanting west,
Thou leadest down into the glow
Where all those Heaven-bound sunsets go,
Ever from toil to rest.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Thither where sorrows cease,
To a new life, to an old past,
Softly and silently we haste,
Into a land of Peace.

How pleasant are thy paths, O Death !
Straight to our Father's Home,
All loss were gain that gained us this—
The sight of God, that single bliss
Of the grand world to come.

F. W. FABER.

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“ *There is not room for Death.*”

No coward soul is mine,
No trembler in the world's storm-troubled sphere :
I see Heaven's glories shine,
And faith shines equal, arming me from fear.

O God within my breast,
Almighty, ever-present Deity !
Life—that in me has rest,
As I,—undying Life—have power in Thee !

* * * * *

Though earth and man were gone,
And suns and universes cease to be,
And Thou wert left alone,
Every existence would exist in Thee.

There is not room for Death,
Nor atom that his might could render void :
Thou—Thou art Being and Breath,
And what Thou art may never be destroyed.
EMILY BRONTË : *Last Lines.*

Home by different ways. Yet all
Homeward bound thro' prayer and praise,
Young with old, and great with small,
Home by different ways.

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Many nights and many days
Wind must bluster, rain must fall,
Quake the quicksand, shift the haze.

Life hath called and death will call
Saints who praying kneel at gaze,
Ford the flood or leap the wall,
Home by different ways.

C. G. ROSSETTI.

"Death is a servant."

Always be sure of one fact, that Death is a servant, having a Master over him : as the inscription at Zermatt says, over a man killed by an avalanche, *It is I, be not afraid*. Death beats his drum, this way and that, in the crowd of our lives ; he is doing what he was told : and I hope that I shall think thus of him when he comes to me. . . . The wonder of Death is nothing, compared to the wonder of Life ; and the Kingdom of Death is nowhere, compared to the Kingdom of God.

STEPHEN PAGET.

The Lord is my shepherd ;
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures :
He leadeth me to waters of rest.

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He refresheth my soul :

He guideth me on right paths for His Name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death,

I will fear no evil : for Thou art with me ;

Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Ps. xxiii. 1-4.

Through the Valley.

As I walk through the Valley of Shadows
No evil do I fear,
The Staff of Thy Love doth comfort me,
Thy Rod itself hath cheer ;
For they guide me with care to the pastures fair
Where the living waters flow,
Where the shadows give place to the Sun of Thy grace,
And Thy Passion-Flowers grow.

So I come through the Valley of Shadows ;
It was very drear and dark,
For Death had been reaping his harvest there,
And had left it bare and stark.
But the shadowy way climbs up to the day,
And I press on with heart elate,
For the end of my quest is the shining crest,
And a wide-flung Open Gate.

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And One hath a sumptuous table spread,
Inside the Open Gate,
And there with welcoming hands and face,
My coming He doth wait.
And His greeting sweet doth my joy complete,
As he draws me in to rest,
For I know that the road I so wearily trod
Is the way His Love deemed best.

And there of His radiant company,
Full many a one I see,
Who has won through the Valley of Shadows
To the larger liberty.
Even there in the grace of the heavenly place,
It is joy to meet mine own,
And to know that not one but has valiantly won
By the way of the Cross, his crown.

JOHN OXENHAM : *The Vision Splendid.*

If ye know the welcome that abideth you when ye come home, ye would hasten your pace ; for ye shall see your Lord put up His own holy hand to your face, and wipe all tears from your eyes ; and I trow then ye shall have some joy of heart.—SAMUEL RUTHERFORD : *Letters.*

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"Death a superb victory."

"The last great adventure" is the phrase by which a man once described death as applied to himself, when the disabled ship, on which he was, plunged to her doom. . . . He was not an ecclesiastic or a religionist. He was an actor. That is exactly what death is—not something apart from or hostile to life, but the final stage in the experience of mortality. . . . In these days, when the beat of the wings of the angel of death is ever sounding in our ears . . . it is our duty to look at the unfearful side of [it]. Let it be said, with the glorious certainty that belongs to the assertion, death in its Christian character is a superb victory, crowning all the victories of life. . . . The moment is an opportune one in which to get a truer and more wholesome and more whole view of death than that which ordinarily prevails. If for us it is a hard discipline to say goodbye for a while, the going from earth marks a gala day for the one who goes.

If we think of death as an introduction into conditions wholly foreign and unsuited to human nature, death must be something to be feared. It is unwonted in that it is untried. But it is thoroughly human in that it is part of universal human experience. It is suited to us. It is the next thing we need when we have finished here. Our Lord promises by His own representative career what

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will happen to us. . . . The life of His companions, after His reappearance from the grave, fits into His and His into theirs. What strikes one forcibly is the absence of anything like a break in the continuity of His personality. . . .

As we think of the multitudes of our own generation who are going into the other world in close comradeship, it will be well for us to consider the wholeness of life, and, whatever new and developed features there may be, how fitted it is for those who are entering it. . . . Then as to our nearer relationship with God . . . that complete realization of God's presence and our nearness to Him, which is the greatest gift of Heaven. After death, the earliest impact of God, so to speak, will be His self giving, His tender love. A little while ago a child lay dying, and exclaimed : " I see the good God, and He is so gentle to me. I want to pray." Then later : " This is a beautiful house, I think I shall stay here ;" the child spoke profound truth to the age to which she belonged for so short a moment. The other world which welcomed her was a place prepared for her, and God was chiefly gentle. . . . One of the just demands that the human heart urges is that the ultimate abode of men should be thoroughly human. By that I mean that every feature of the life shall respond to the expectation of every feature of our nature in its highest development. So the social aspect of Heaven is symbolized by the great multitude which no

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man can number. . . . This society is human. Our life here with its temporal and temporary occupations and interests is not going to be magically changed into something quite different when death shall have waved his wand for the last time. The flow and continuity of human character is no more dislocated by death than it is by sleep. Everything worthy here, down to the playing of the boys and girls in the street, has its counterpart and full inwardness there.

BISHOP BRENT : *The Mount of Vision.*

“ I still am near.”

Weep not for me ;—
Be blithe as wont, nor tinge with gloom
The stream of love that circles home,
Light hearts and free !
Joy in the gifts Heaven's bounty lends ;
Nor miss my face, dear friends !

I still am near ;—
Watching the smiles I prized on earth,
Your converse mild, your blameless mirth
Now too I hear
Of whisper'd sounds the tale complete,
Low prayers and musings sweet.

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A sea before
The Throne is spread ;—its pure still glass
Pictures all earth-scenes as they pass.

We, on its shore,
Share, in the bosom of our rest
God's knowledge, and are blest.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

“ God's own Son was once a boy.”

Lest Heaven be thronged with grey-beards hoary,
God, who made boys for His delight,
Goes in earth's hour of grief and glory,
And calls the boys in from the night ;
When they come trooping from the war
Our skies have many a new gold star.

Heaven's thronged with gay and careless faces,
New-waked from dreams of dreadful things,
They walk in green and pleasant places,
And by the crystal water-springs,
Forget the nightmare field of slain,
And the fierce thirst and the strong pain.

Forget ! God smiles to see them merry,
For His own Son was once a boy ;
They never shall be old and weary,
But of their youth shall have great joy,

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And in the playing-fields of Heaven
Shall run and leap, new-washed, new-shriven.

Now Heaven is by the young invaded,
'Scaped from the winter and the storm.
Stainless and simple as He made it,
God keeps the boy's heart out of harm
The old wise Saints look on and smile,
They are so young and without guile.

Oh, if the sonless mothers weeping,
And widowed girls could look inside
The country that hath them in keeping
Who went to the Great War and died,
They would rise and put their mourning off,
Praise God and say : " He has enough."

KATHARINE TYNAN : *Flower of Youth.*

" The power of His Resurrection."

Christianity does something more than declare faith in immortality. It proclaims a future in which all that made life good and beautiful and courageous is developed beyond men's present attainments in that ampler world of the Unveiled Presence. It is a resurrection life. In it youth, which was just bursting forth into manhood's glory, is made more glorious, and weak age finds the glow of renewed vigour. Man is possessed of " the power of an

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endless life." It is a power which gives immortality its true character and shows it to be an ever more and more abundant life.

Faith in the Resurrection assures us that those who have passed out of our sight have lost nothing that made their life true and beautiful, but have attained a larger life. If that were all it would be a religion of great joy. But there is something more. . . . The Christian doctrine of the life after death answers to the demand that moral principles and self-sacrificing service for the good of others still prevail. Not seldom is the good worsted in this world. . . . Here and now righteousness may be defeated. But moral principles endure beyond this temporal life, and in the world across the Valley of the Shadow of Death they are recognized to be supreme. There the victory is with truth and justice. The ideal is seen to be the real, as it is the eternal.—*From "The Times," Easter Eve, 1918.*

*"When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not
be burned."*

We meet in joy, though we part in sorrow ;
We part to-night, but we meet to-morrow.
Be it flood or blood the path that's trod,
All the same it leads home to God :
Be it furnace-fire voluminous,
One like God's Son will walk with us.

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What are these that glow from afar,
These that lean over the golden bar,
Strong as the lion, pure as the dove,
With open arms and hearts of love ?
They the blessed ones gone before,
They the blessed for evermore.
Out of great tribulation they went
Home to their home of Heaven-content ;
Through flood or blood or furnace-fire,
To the rest that fulfils desire.

Light above light, and Bliss beyond bliss,
Whom words cannot utter ; lo, Who is this ?
As a King with many crowns He stands,
And our names are graven upon His hands ;
As a priest with God-uplifted eyes,
He offers for us His Sacrifice ;
As the Lamb of God for sinners slain,
That we too may live, He lives again ;
As our Champion behold Him stand,
Strong to save us, at God's Right Hand.

God the Father give us grace
To walk in the light of Jesus' Face.
God the Son give us a part
In the hiding-place of Jesus' Heart :

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God the Spirit so hold us up,
That we may drink of Jesus' cup.

* * * * *

Yet one moment awful and dark,
Then safety within the Veil and the Ark ;
Yet one effort by Christ His grace,
Then Christ for ever face to face.

C. G. ROSSETTI : *The Martyr's Song.*

“ *The power of an endless life.* ”

And this is death : I understand it all.
New being waits me ; new perceptions must
Be born in me before I plunge therein ;
Which last is Death's affair ; and while I speak,
Minute by minute he is filling me
With power ; and while my foot is on the threshold
Of boundless life—the doors unopened yet,
All preparations not complete within—
I turn new knowledge upon old events,
And the effect is . . . but I must not tell ;
It is not lawful.

ROBERT BROWNING : *Paracelsus.*

Earth fades, heaven breaks on me : I shall stand next
Before God's throne : the moment's close at hand

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When man the first, last time, has leave to lay
His whole heart bare before its Maker, leave
To clear up the long error of a life,
And choose one happiness for evermore.

ROBERT BROWNING : *Strafford*.

Death.

Thou bids't me come away,
And I'll no longer stay,
Than for to shed some tears
For faults of former years ;
And to repent some crimes,
Done in the present times :
And next to take a bit
Of Bread, and Wine with it :
To don my robes of love,
Fit for the place above,
To gird my loins about
With charity throughout ;
And so to travel hence
With feet of innocence :
These done, I'll only cry
God mercy and so die.

ROBERT HERRICK.

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“ *I shall not die, but live.*”

I say that we *know* that we shall not wholly die with physical death. It is true that we cannot prove it. Many things point that way. Many things show us that it is most reasonable. Many things clear themselves when we accept that as the truth. We cannot prove it. . . . But we *know* without proof. There is something in us that is eternal, that goes out beyond the momentary and the fleeting, and that refuses to be satisfied with anything less than the Eternal God.

We are certain that our short life on earth is not all : it is a stage in a larger process. Life is a school. It is not a prison : nor a playground : it is a school, and we are being educated for a purpose. When our school-days end, life in a sense begins ; so death, which ends this life, ushers us into another and a larger life.

Put it as you will, we have the indestructible conviction that we shall live on after death : and this conviction is allied to all in life that ennobles and uplifts : it is sanctioned and proclaimed as truth by Christ. “ Because I live, ye shall live also. . . .”

What then does death bring with it ? . . . Death brings us face to face with *things as they are*. The soul . . . will find itself in a region of absolute reality, . . . in “ the hands of the living God. . . .” To some . . . it will not be altogether unfamiliar ; to others

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it will be a startling surprise. But to all it must be the very best thing possible. It must be good to find ourselves in His hands. There is none who loves us as He loves us. It must be good—nay—the very best—to come right into the presence of God : to find ourselves there with no cover and no escape. It is a fearful thing indeed. Only one thing could be more fearful : that is, if it were possible to pass into some world where He was *not* ; into some universe which God did not guide and govern, where He had abdicated His control : to fall *out* of the hands of the living God. That would be death indeed—utter, irremediable despair.

“ I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air ;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.”

If our poor human love can follow those who have passed out of our sight, how much more can the great love of God follow and overtake and encompass the souls which He has made ?—DEAN ARMITAGE ROBINSON.

Lord ! it is not life to live,
If Thy presence Thou deny ;
Lord ! if Thou Thy presence give,
’Tis no longer death—to die.

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Source and giver of repose,
Singly from Thy smile it flows ;
Peace and happiness are Thine,—
Mine they are, if Thou art mine.

CHARLES WESLEY.

“ O Death, where is thy sting ?”

One wrote of old, “ The struggle of this dying
Is all I dread :
I shall not heed when men above me, sighing,
Say, ‘ He is dead.’ ”

Not in such words, oh Father of our Spirits,
Speak we again :
A fear, a hope each child of us inherits,
Making them vain.

Awful the hour, and shall be through the ages,
That cloeth Life ;
With the worn Soul the weary Body wages
Self-torturing strife.

And the vast doubt wherewith our souls are shaken
Outlasts the tomb !
“ Where, in what regions, shall the wanderer waken,
Gazing on whom ?”

* * * * *

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Such was my cry : hath not the mighty Maker
Who gave me Christ,
Hath He not granted me a sweet Awaker
For the last tryst ?

Given a Son who left the peace unbroken
That reigns above,
That He might whisper God's great name unspoken,
The name of Love !

* * * * *

Lord, when I tread this valley of our dying,
Sharp cliffs between,
Where over all, *one* ghastly shadow lying,
Fills the ravine,

E'en then, Thy kingly sceptre being o'er me,
I will not fear ;
Thy crook, my Shepherd, dimly seen before me,
My way shall clear.

And when the grave must yield her prey down-stricken,
When sleep is o'er,
When the strange stirs of life begin to quicken
This form once more.

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Oh, Son of Man, if Thee and not another
I here have known
If I may see Thee then, our First-born Brother,
Upon Thy throne ;

How stern soe'er, how terrible in brightness
That dawn shall break,
I shall be satisfied with Thy dear likeness
When I awake.

THOS. HODGKIN.

" Neither Death nor Life."

With Death I settled once for all,
The grave has lost its sting for me ;
But Life, if I come back, may call
My soul from Thee.

Send me not back to Life, if I
Must fail the Friend, whom I have made.
To live without Him, not to die,
I am afraid.

If, losing my first love to Thee,
Life shall entice me from Thy side,
Lose not Thy first great love to me,
Christ crucified !

EDWARD SHILLITO :

The Prayer of a Soldier in the Trenches.

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"I will lay me down in peace and take my rest."

I lay me down to sleep
With little thought or care
Whether my waking find
Me here or there.

A bowing, burdened head
That only asks to rest
Unquestioning upon
A loving Breast.

My good right hand forgets
Its cunning now,
To march the weary march
I know not how.

I am not eager, bold,
Nor strong—all that is past :
I am ready not to do
At last, at last.

My half-day's work is done,
And this is all my part :
I give my patient God
A patient heart ;

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And grasp His banner still,
Though all its blue be dim ;
These stripes, no less than stars,
Lead after Him.*

ANON.

Crossing the Bar.

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me !
And may there be no moaning of the bar
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless
deep
Turns again home.

Twilight, and evening bell,
And after that the dark !
And may there be no sadness of farewell
When I embark.

* This poem was found under the pillow of an American soldier who had died in hospital during the Civil War—hence the allusion to the “Stars and Stripes.”

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For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON.

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The King's gateway : thoughts in verse

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The King's gateway : thoughts in verse
and prose concerning death and the
life beyond / collected and arranged
by R.E. Selfe. -- London : Society
for Promoting Christian Knowledge,
1918.
62p. ; 20cm.

1. Future life--Meditations.
2. Future life--Poetry.

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